



Portsmouth, Virginia Police Department General Orders Manual

Police and Citizen Awards			ADM	43
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APPROVED: Edward G. Hargis, Chief of Police				

PURPOSE: To recognize Police Department personnel and community members for outstanding acts of public service. (26.1.2)

GUIDELINES: It is the Department's policy to publicly recognize and reward extraordinary, exceptionally meritorious, or outstanding acts of heroism and other actions, which are above and beyond those normally expected, and which distinguish the individual from those performing similar acts.

DEFINITIONS:

Police Employee: Both sworn and civilian personnel.

Sworn Employees/Personnel: Police Officers, Police Sergeants, Police Lieutenants, Police Captains, Police Commander, Assistant Police Chief and the Chief of Police.

Civilian Employees/Personnel: Administrative Support Staff, Dispatchers, Animal Control Officers, Security Guards and Forensic and AFIS personnel.

PROCEDURES:

I. Honor Board

- A. The Chief of Police will establish an Honor Board that receives and reviews award recommendations. The Chief of Police or designee will select honor board members. A new board shall be selected annually from a cross section of the police department, however this does not prohibit past members from being re-selected. The Honor Board shall consist of seven members.
- B. Honor Board members will select a chairperson who will forward award nominations to the Chief of Police or Designee.
- C. The Chief of Police or designee will deliver the Honor Board's charge.

II. Nomination Procedures: Any Department employee or community member can submit award nominations. To ensure that the qualifications as described in this policy are met, the nominating person or organization should have knowledge of the event through personal observation, or as a result of an investigation into the event.

- A. Letter of Nomination: The letter of nomination will include, at a minimum, the following information:
 1. Describe the reasons for the nomination.
 2. Date and location of the event.
 3. Names of all persons involved, the nature of their involvement, and the recommended award.

4. Specific, detailed actions meriting the award, and any other pertinent information.

- B. Timely nomination is essential to a successful awards program. A nomination must be submitted to the designee as soon as possible following the act on which it is based, or by the deadline. All nominations should be appropriately justified and sufficiently detailed to allow for proper evaluation. Employees shall place their nominations in the designated folder in Police Records.
- C. Upon convening of the Honor Board, members will conduct a review of the circumstances surrounding the nomination. The Honor Board will forward a final recommendation regarding the award to the Chief of Police for his or her final decision.
- D. The Chief of Police will forward nominations from Civic Organizations to the designee.

III. Awards and Decorations: The following awards have been established in their order of importance:

- A. **POLICE CROSS:** Awarded to the family of a police officer who has made the supreme sacrifice of his or her life while in the line of duty. Line of duty is not restricted to actual duty hours, but may also cover any time where an officer is acting in an official and sanctioned law enforcement capacity. The award shall consist of a medallion and a plaque bearing the officer's shield, photograph, and a description denoting the circumstances of the death. A duplicate plaque shall be placed on display on the Wall of Honor.
- B. **MEDAL OF HONOR:** Awarded to a Police employee who distinguishes him or herself conspicuously by gallantry, personal bravery, and intrepidity at the risk of his or her own life, above and beyond the call of duty. The deed performed must have been one of personal bravery or self-sacrifice so conspicuous as to clearly distinguish the individual from his or her peers. The award shall consist of a certificate, and the decoration of the medallion and ribbon. The Medal of Honor recipient shall be further recognized by a plaque displayed on the department's Medal of Honor Wall.
- C. **MEDAL OF VALOR:** Awarded to a Police employee who distinguishes him or herself through an act of extraordinary heroism not justifying the Medal of Honor. The act may involve imminent personal hazard while carrying out police duties, while saving a life, and similar situations which are considered above and beyond the normal call of duty. The act should have been notable so as to set the recipient apart from his or her peers. The award shall consist of a certificate and the decoration of the medallion and ribbon.
- D. **LEGION OF HONOR:** Awarded to an employee who is feloniously and seriously injured in the line of duty. The felonious act shall be that activity outlined in the criminal code dealing with violence directed against an individual. The award shall consist of a certificate and the decoration of the medallion and ribbon.
- E. **LIFE SAVING:** Awarded to an employee who distinguishes him or herself through an act of lifesaving not justifying the Medal of Honor or Medal of Valor. Only one award is authorized for any one incident regardless of the number of lives saved. The award shall consist of a certificate and the decoration of the medallion and ribbon.

- F. **MERITORIOUS CONDUCT:** Bestowed upon an employee who distinguishes him or herself by performing his or her duties in a manner that clearly exceeds what is normally required or expected, or for a highly accreditable accomplishment. The award shall consist of a certificate and the decoration of the medallion and ribbon.
- G. **CHIEF'S AWARD:** Awarded to Department members, at the sole discretion of the Chief of Police, in special recognition of exceptional contributions to the Department's goals. The award shall consist of an acrylic statue and ribbon.
- H. **POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR:** Bestowed upon one police officer in recognition of those qualities which distinguish him or her as a professional in the field of policing. It shall serve as proper recognition among fellow officers and the public for this individual's dedication to duty, outstanding job performance, unsullied moral character, exceptional community/civic leadership or service, professional police image and bearing. The nomination letter will be sent directly to the Chief of Police and must specify "of the year award." The Command Staff shall make the final selection among the nominations forwarded considering the following criteria: the officer shall have better than average disciplinary record; shall be rated in the "meets or exceeds" column on all areas of the past year's evaluations; shall not be nominated as a gesture not deserving of the award or for appreciation or retirement only. The recipient shall receive a certificate and decoration of a medallion and ribbon.
- I. **DISPATCHER OF THE YEAR:** Bestowed upon one dispatcher in recognition of those qualities which distinguish him/her as a professional in the field of emergency communications. It shall serve as proper recognition among fellow employees and the public for this individual's dedication to duty, outstanding job performance, unsullied moral character, professional image and bearing. The nomination letter will be sent directly to the Chief of Police and must specify "of the year award". The Command Staff shall make the final selection among the nominations forwarded considering the following criteria; the dispatcher shall have a better than average disciplinary record; shall not be nominated as a gesture not deserving of the award or for appreciation or for retirement only. The recipient shall receive a certificate and decoration of a medallion and ribbon.
- J. **CIVILIAN OF THE YEAR:** Bestowed upon one civilian employee in recognition of those qualities which distinguish him or her as a professional in the field of police department operations or extensions thereof. It shall serve as proper recognition among fellow employees and the public for this individual's dedication to duty, outstanding job performance, unsullied moral character, professional image and bearing. The nomination letter will be sent directly to the Chief of Police and must specify "of the year award". The Command Staff shall make the final selection among the nominations forwarded considering the following criteria; the civilian employee shall have better than average disciplinary record; shall not be nominated as a gesture not deserving of the award or for appreciation or for retirement only. The recipient will receive a certificate and decoration of a medallion and ribbon.
- K. **SUPERVISOR OF THE YEAR:** Awarded to a first-line supervisor, either sworn or civilian, who exemplifies the core values and principles that are essential to the success of both the agency and the employees under their command. The nomination letter will be sent directly to the Chief of Police and must specify "of the year award". The Command Staff shall make the final selection among the nominations forwarded considering the above criteria. The recipient will receive a certificate and decoration of medallion and ribbon.

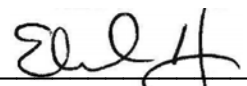
- L. **AUXILIARY POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR:** Bestowed upon one auxiliary police officer in recognition of those qualities that distinguish him/her as a professional in the field of policing. It shall serve as proper recognition among fellow officers and the public for this individual's dedication to duty, outstanding job performance, unsullied moral character, professional police image and bearing. The nomination letter will be sent directly to the Chief of Police and must specify "of the year award". The Command Staff shall make the final selection among the nominations forwarded considering the following criteria: the officer shall have better than average disciplinary record; shall not be nominated as a gesture not deserving of the award or for appreciation only. The recipient will receive a certificate and decoration of a medallion and ribbon.
- M. **QUARTERLY EMPLOYEE (OFFICER, DISPATCHER, CIVILIAN, TEAM):** Given to an employee or team in recognition for performance of duty above and beyond the norm as measured for the quarter. Nominations are made to the Chief's Designee and recipients are chosen by the Command Staff. Anyone can make nominations for the award. Quarterly nominations will also be considered for other annual awards. The recipients shall receive a certificate and, in some cases, a reserved parking space for the quarter, and a ribbon.
- N. **OUTSTANDING JOB PERFORMANCE:** Given to an employee in recognition of outstanding performance in carrying out his or her duties. This decoration may be considered the "next level" of recognition up from the Letter of Commendation, which may be given by a supervisor for work well done. Areas of consideration may be the effecting of a unique arrest, conducting an outstanding investigation, performing or implementing special functions or projects which reflect favorably upon the department or City, and a multitude of other outstanding acts or deeds. This is not limited to only an individual, but may include a unit or team award based on a group effort. Each recipient shall receive a certificate and decoration of a ribbon.
- O. **SERVICE AWARD:** Signifies an employee's years of service. They are worn in five-year increments, and are authorized to be worn after five years of service have been given.
- P. **MILITARY SERVICE AWARD:** Given to an individual who is activated to a non-training military deployment for more than six (6) months or for acts of domestic or foreign terrorism, or natural or manmade disasters. Members must submit a copy of their orders to the Administrative Services Division. The individual will be recognized when they return from deployment at the annual awards ceremony. Each recipient will receive the decoration of a ribbon.
- Q. **LETTER OF COMMENDATION:** Given for acts or services which do not meet the criteria for other awards or decorations. A citizen or any employee can initiate this type of recognition and it is generally for exceptional work, or appreciation for services performed by a Department employee. The letter of Commendation should be typed and forwarded through the chain of command. The flow may be up or down depending upon the letter's point of origin. The Chief of Police's secretary shall prepare for the Chief's approval a cover letter to the letter of Commendation to accompany said letter. A copy shall be made available to the officer and a copy filed in the employee's personnel jacket in Police Personnel. Supervisors are encouraged to make appropriate and timely use of this form of appreciation whenever an employee has earned such commendation.
- R. **SERVICE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARD:** Given to a private citizen, organization, or member of another agency who either rendered significant assistance to a Department member or aided the department in the accomplishment of its mission or with solving a crime. Volunteers will

be recognized by receiving a lapel pin with the number of years for volunteering in increments of five, ten, fifteen and twenty. The recipients of this award shall receive a certificate.

IV. Wearing of Awards: Employees will wear awards centered above the right side shirt pocket, even with the top of the pocket. The highest-ranking award worn is to the left, or closest to the heart. The ranking is as follows (in descending order):

- A. Medal of Honor
 - 1. First – gold frame
 - 2. Two or more – gold stars for each award
- B. Medal of Valor
 - 1. First – bronze V
 - 2. Second – silver V
 - 3. Third – gold V
- C. Legion of Honor
- D. Lifesaving Award
- E. Meritorious Conduct
- F. Chief's Award
- G. Employee of the Year
 - 1. Officer
 - 2. Dispatcher
 - 3. Civilian
 - 4. Auxiliary
 - 5. Supervisor
- H. Employee of the Quarter
 - 1. Officer
 - 2. Dispatcher
 - 3. Civilian
 - 4. Team
- I. Outstanding Job Performance
- J. Service Award
 - 1. Five years – bronze star
 - 2. Ten years – silver star
 - 3. Fifteen years – gold star
 - 4. Twenty years – gold and bronze stars
 - 5. Twenty-five years – gold and silver stars
 - 6. Thirty years – two gold stars
 - 7. Thirty-five years – two gold and one bronze star
 - 8. Forty years – two gold and one silver star
 - 9. Forty-five years or more – three gold stars
- K. Military Service Award
- L. Special Awards (i.e., Isabel ribbon)
- M. Ribbons awarded by specialized training schools such as the FBI National Academy or the Southern Police Institute if the ribbon is of the same size and material as Department issued ribbons.
- N. All other multiple awards will have a bronze oak leaf cluster affixed for the second award, a silver oak leaf cluster for the third award, or a gold oak leaf cluster for a fourth or subsequent award. In this case only one bar will be worn for each award.

- O. Personnel will wear only authorized ribbons on their uniforms.
 - P. Non-Departmental/Special Awards: Employees may receive awards from other agencies or organizations that are not compatible with the bars are authorized by the Department. Examples are those presented for Game Warden of the Year, awards from the Police Work Dog Association, and other similar groups. The recipients of these awards may request permission in writing from the Chief of Police to wear these awards in place of one of the two specialty pins authorized for wear on the right pocket flap.
- V. Retirement: The Chief of Police, or designee, is responsible for ensuring retirement presentations are prepared as follows. Retirement presentations are based on the total cumulative years of service with the City of Portsmouth and the Portsmouth Police Department.
- A. Sworn personnel:
 - 1. Ten to 14 years of service: the recipient shall receive a certificate with the years of service.
 - 2. Fifteen to 19 years of service: the recipient shall receive a certificate with the years of service and an acrylic statue.
 - 3. Twenty years and up: the recipient shall receive a certificate with the years of service and a shadow box.
 - B. Civilian personnel:
 - 1. Ten to 14 years of service: the recipient shall receive a certificate with the years of service.
 - 2. Fifteen to 19 years of service: the recipient shall receive a certificate with the years of service and an acrylic statue.
 - 3. Twenty years and up: the recipient shall receive a certificate with the years of service and an acrylic clock statue.
- VI. Any employee who retires from the Police Department under dishonorable circumstances such as due to criminal or pending criminal charges is not eligible for the retirement presentations outlined in this general order.

Approved:  _____
Edward G. Hargis, Chief of Police